Welcome to the CSA season at Andrews University Student Gardens!

We are excited upon providing fresh produce to you and your household. This Spring has been good for us this year on the farm, and crops are looking beautiful. As we continue to engage our harvest season, more and more crops will be seasonal. Starting of this season we have an abundant of greens along with herbs and root crops. As the season progress we will continue our full harvest with the abundance of veggies, fruits, and flowers. This week we have tomatoes as a special from Good News Farm at Great Lakes Adventist Academy. Like us, they grow their crops organically and our glad that we are partnering with them this year. We hope you enjoy your shares. Please let us know how we can further assist you this year.

First Week Produce
Tomatoes
Russian Kale
Kale Ripbor
Swiss Chard
Collard Greens
Oregano
Basil Greens
Radishes
Lettuce Greens
Lettuce Red
Kohlrabi

To eat or not to eat?
by Lani Woodruff

Like any gal, I love flowers. They make me smile. They make me feel connected. Grounded. When I think of flowers, I think about two of my senses: the sense of smell and the sense of sight. Their colors and shapes woo me, drawing me in scandalously, not to just look, but to stare. And upon the looking, I must venture closer to breathe in their fragrance. I close my eyes, and fill my lungs with their perfume. So when my husband, Garth, suggested that I write a blog about edible flowers, it gave me pause. Honestly, I am not interested in eating flowers. It’s like chili in chocolate to me. Why ruin such a good thing? Chocolate is supposed to be sweet. Not spicy. Flowers are to look at and smell. Not eat.

Yet, historically accounts of using flowers for culinary purposes date back to 140 BC in the literature of the time. Even the Bible mentions in the Old Testament the eating of bitter herbs (one of which has been translated to be the dandelion flower). The Chinese, Indian, Roman, Greek, Incas, Aztecs, all cultures have used edible flowers in ancient cultural rituals. It has even been said that the audiences in the Renaissance enjoyed stewed primroses and Rose Petal water while viewing Shakespearean dramas. Apparently, the eating of flowers is quite appropriate. Admittedly, while I may prefer more to visually enjoy a flower eating them can be very beneficial. Edible flowers are not high in macronutrients: fats, carbs or proteins. So they are what we would call low cal. What they do contain though are vitamins such as C or A and other trace elements like calcium, zinc and magnesium. In fact, three flowers I don’t have a problem eating are cauliflower, broccoli (technically, premature flowers) and artichokes. They are packed with micronutrients such as vitamins A, B1 & B3,K, Folate, potassium and calcium, not to mention fiber. Borage is believed to make you forget your worries and give you courage by stimulating your adrenaline. And supposedly marigolds bring happiness. 

Delivery Estimation
Benton Harbor/St. Joseph/Bridgman/Stevensville
8:30am - 12:30pm
Berrien Springs
11:00am - 2:30pm
Dowagiac/Berrien Center
9:30am - 11:30am
East Berrien Springs
12:00pm - 2:00pm
Niles/South Bend
3:00pm - 4:30pm
West Berrien Springs/Buchanan
8:30am - 10:00am

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As far as flavor goes, the spectrum of tastes that edible flowers give is every bit as wide and varied as the physical characteristics we see. We are all familiar with the flavor of Chamomile tea. Not so well known, Bee Balm when used in a tea gives off a similar taste as Earl Grey tea. Borage has a cucumber-like flavor. Calendula is said to be the poor man’s saffron giving a spicy, tangy and peppery flavor and adds a golden hue to food. Gardenia’s give off a light, sweet flavor while lilac yields a lemony, floral and pungent taste. Nasturtiums taste peppery. Pansies are tart. Roses are sweet – the stronger the smell, the stronger the flavor.

But for me, introducing edible flowers to a culinary dish will always be more about the beauty they bring. Perhaps that is why they were ever eaten in the first place. Like the story of Eve in the garden enticed by the gorgeous fruit, we are drawn to beautiful things and flowers are no exception. If they look good, maybe they taste good too. Being part Hawaiian with relatives on the islands, I grew up visiting there often and I don’t think there is ever a dish served in a restaurant there without a flower gracing your plate. Their presence made my food seem exotic. But never did I eat the flower. I held it, smelled it and tucked it behind my ear. Since then, as I have grown and had my own kitchen to create culinary delights in, edible flowers have graced my table. They have been candied and frozen in bowls of ice. I have poked them into cakes and stuffed them into appetizers. Tossed them into salads. And always, they make me want to eat something more.

**RECIPE**

**ROASTED KOHLRABI**

**Ingredients:**
- 1 1/2 pounds fresh kohlrabi, ends trimmed, thick green skin sliced off with a knife, diced
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon garlic (optional, to my taste)
- Salt
- Good vinegar

**Directions:**
Set oven to 450F. Toss the diced kohlrabi with olive oil, garlic and salt in a bowl. (The kohlrabi can be tossed with oil and seasonings right on the pan but uses more oil.) Spread evenly on a rimmed baking sheet and put into oven (it needn’t be fully preheated) and roast for 30 – 35 minutes, stirring every five minutes after about 20 minutes. Sprinkle with a good vinegar (probably at the table so the kohlrabi doesn’t get squishy).

For more Kohlrabi recipes go to: http://augardens.com/category/kohlrabi/

**GREEN SMOOTHIE**

4 leaves Collard Greens
4 leaves Purple Kale
2 Leaves Rainbow Chard
an Asian Pear*
Pear*
Small piece of Ginger
1 Banana
1 cup frozen Blueberries**
2 cups water or ice
*You can always substitute pear for apple, mango or try out any other fruit. As well you can substitute part of water for almond milk for softer taste and texture.
**Leave couple of berries to decorate the smoothie

For more recipes please visit our website at http://augardens.com/recipes/

**KITCHEN TIPS**

- Wrap the greens in a paper towel and put them in a plastic bag. Refrigerate. Change the towel every 2-3 days.
- Freeze and preserve fresh herbs in olive oil. The herbs will infuse the oil while freezing, and the ice cubes are very handy for cooking; just pop one out and use as the base of a dish. Works best with rosemary, sage, thyme, and oregano. Dill, basil, and mint should always be used fresh.

Free Range Eggs are available for $3.00 from Redbarn Farm in Buchanan, MI.
To order eggs for your next delivery please email <info@augardens.com>

Local Pickup Our normal pick-up location is at our Student Gardens stand nearby Neighbor-to-Neighbor. Local-pick up’s are available on Fridays between 11:00am-2:00pm.

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